

Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



STATE OF ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF LAW
1275 W. WASHINGTON STREET
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007-2926
WWW.AZAG.GOV

ANDREA M. ESQUER
PRESS SECRETARY
PHONE: (602) 542-8019
CELL PHONE: (602) 725-2200

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Man Pleads Guilty to Human Smuggling Charges

(Phoenix, Ariz. – May 10, 2006) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced that Adolfo Gomez-Lopez, also known as Francisco Lopez, 24, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to smuggle human beings and one count of assisting a criminal syndicate.

The charges stem from a joint investigation by the Department of Public Safety and the Phoenix Police Department that led to the arrest and indictment of eight suspected coyotes in March. The charges followed the execution of search warrants on two Phoenix apartments.

The investigation revealed that this crime organization began smuggling people into the country for money more than two years ago. Many undocumented immigrants were housed in Phoenix until they could be transported to other parts of the United States.

"Human smuggling is a billion-dollar criminal operation in Arizona," Goddard said. "These criminals bring violence to our neighborhoods. We are working hard to disrupt these criminal organizations by prosecuting the leaders and taking away what they want most – money."

Gomez-Lopez is scheduled to be sentenced by Maricopa County Superior Court Commissioner Frank Johnson on June 12. Assistant Attorney General Theodore Campagnolo is prosecuting this case.

###